



AMERICORPS LEADERS PROGRAM

A Service Leadership Development Program of the Corporation for National Service
INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEVELOPING SERVICE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

The primary emphasis of the AmeriCorps Leaders Program is to develop service leaders. The most important aspect of a program's application to become a Service Site is the service experience the program intends to provide a Leader. A Service Site is responsible for providing supervised leadership service learning experiences designed to combine the competencies learned at training events with the genuine professional challenges of a Service Site. The needs of each program are unique and will provide opportunities for the Leader to utilize and transfer skills to others.

Guidelines for Service Learning Activities

- *The Leader must be provided with the time and support necessary to facilitate reflection on action and thus learning and growth.*
- *Leaders cannot be used as a staff position, any position for which you would hire a full-time employee (e.g. you have three team leaders and you wish to use the Leader for the fourth team leader,) nor can Leaders serve in a supervisory role.*
- *Program coordination is the responsibility of the program director. AmeriCorps Leaders may assist by providing information and resources on best practices or by developing portions of the program such as the training curriculum.*
- *Leaders cannot be responsible for 1) evaluating the AmeriCorps Program 2) writing reports for the AmeriCorps program or 3) the program's payroll or budget.*
- *Leaders may educate the public as to the needs of the program and members but they cannot solicit funds as AmeriCorps Leaders.*
- *While it is understood that all staff members of an AmeriCorps program perform some administrative duties, Leaders are not to serve as administrative staff at your program.*
- *All AmeriCorps Leaders are prohibited from the same activities as AmeriCorps members outlined in the AmeriCorps Member Handbook. Specifically, they cannot influence legislation, organize protests, petitions, boycotts or strikes; promote, deter, or assist in union activities; engage in partisan activities or any activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office; religious instruction; conduct worship services; provide instruction as part of a program that includes ministerial duties; provide direct benefits to a for-profit organization.*

Examples of Service Learning Activities

Based on the successes of the Leader's training roles in the past two years, programs are encouraged to develop a role for the Leader that utilizes the service leadership training and information they have received through formal and informal training. Programs are also encouraged to arrange opportunities for Leaders to pass on to both staff and members the knowledge and skills they are gaining. On the next page you will find examples of leadership service learning experiences. Use these examples to plan activities that both meet the Leader's needs and your program's needs.

Activity 1: Present A Session On Motivating, Coaching And Empowering For Team Leaders

The Leader will develop weekly training sessions with team leaders on how to motivate, coach and empower the members on their team. The Leader will facilitate discussion sessions after each training on what motivates team leaders and members.

Leadership Learning Goals:

- understand how individuals working in the service profession are motivated
- identify appropriate methods of motivation
- demonstrate how to share authority, provide resources, mentor, challenge and encourage
- train others in how to motivate

Activity 3: Build The Program's Capacity To Recruit Non-Member Community Volunteers

The Leader will design and implement recruitment activities to engage the community in the work of the program; assist in the planning, placement and training of volunteers, and coordinate a recognition program to celebrate the accomplishments of the volunteers.

Leadership Learning Goals:

- seeks input from internal and external stakeholders
- articulates program vision clearly in written materials and oral presentations
- provides adequate resources to support community volunteers

Activity 5: Coordinate And Develop State-Wide Training Exchange Opportunities

The Leader will work with the State Commission to develop state-wide training exchanges to share best practices among members and staff. The Leader will encourage peer to peer training as well as develop and present at least one workshop that meets the needs of the members.

Leadership Learning Goals:

- provides clear direction, organizes activities, leads by example, anticipates, plans and implements change
- provides resources and coaching for members to develop their sessions
- demonstrates and improves training skills

Other Examples:

- Organize major events and activities that foster effective interagency communication and encourage more citizens to volunteer in their communities.
- Develop and publish resources that meet the needs of members, programs and communities.
- Build bridges between and among AmeriCorps programs, members, local citizens, and community agencies.

Clearly outline the needs of your program, the activities and learning objectives you propose for the Leader, and the method by which you will assess the Leader's competencies following the activities. As a reminder - do not overload the Leader's work schedule. They will need adequate time for reflection in order to learn from their experiences as well as have state-wide and national roles that take at least 25% of their time.

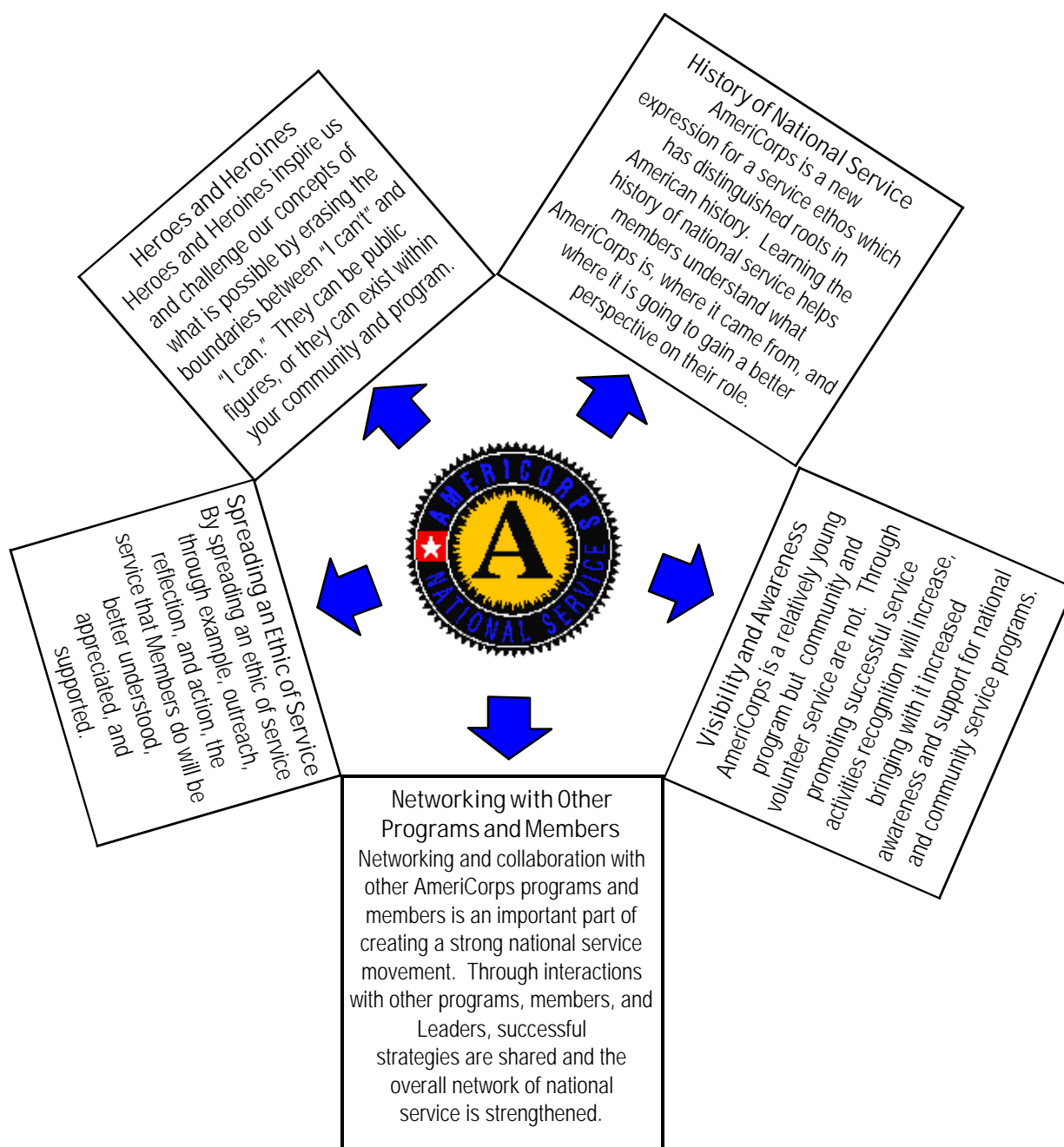


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AMBASSADORSHIP OVERVIEW

The "Ambassadorship," or community liaison, projects and activities of AmeriCorps Leaders help spread an ethic of service and help others understand and support national and community service.





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SERVICE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

By the end of the year long assignment as an AmeriCorps Leader, the AmeriCorps Leaders Program staff expect that each participant will have acquired or enhanced certain service leadership competencies and skills. Below we list the thirteen competencies we have identified as essential for leaders in national and community service. With each competency you will find a brief narrative which describes how the Leader can apply these skills at your site. Sites should not expect Leaders to arrive at their Sites with fully developed skills in all areas.



Problem Solving

Participates in problem-solving activities at the Service Site. Learns how to collect objective data in order to identify and analyze problems. Finds alternative yet appropriate solutions to complex problems.



Collaboration & Teamwork

Develops community networks and coalitions and builds consensus by being enthusiastic and cooperative. Applies the skills necessary to make a group function effectively. Is exposed to diverse ideas and individuals with different perspectives and needs.



Verbal Communication & Public Presentations

Is encouraged to give positive feedback to members. Listens effectively and facilitates an open exchange of ideas. Makes clear and convincing oral presentations to members, peers, community members and the press.



Diversity

Manages sensitivity and appreciation of cultural diversity in ethnic background, age, gender, race, sexual preference and other individual differences. Creates an environment which supports diverse perspectives and culturally-based problem-solving techniques.



Leadership

Helps create a work environment that allows members and others to create their own communities. Is able to develop a vision with others who make this vision their own, even in stressful and complex situations. Uses reflection time for self-assessment to evaluate how behavior and actions may influence members, peers and others.



Personal & Professional Goals Development

Learns to develop "visioning" skills. "Goal setting" is based on realistic expectations monitored and evaluated on a regular basis by the Site Supervisor. Assists members and others in their personal and professional goal development.



Motivation, Coaching and Empowerment

Develops self-confidence in members and others by encouraging personal and professional growth. Enables members to take responsibility for their actions. Validates members' needs in order to help them prepare for their roles as professionals.



Training and Facilitation

Provides formal and informal training opportunities for members and peers. Facilitates the learning and growth in members and others.



Decision-Making

Has opportunities to test judgment under pressure and in the face of opposition. Steady exposure to the "real world" where decisions must be made based on inadequate information and where problems rarely get fully solved because new ones keep appearing.



Conflict Management

Recognizes conflict in the early stages. Understands own personal conflict resolution style. Is encouraged to use multiple strategies for conflict resolution.



Written Communication

Expresses simple and complex ideas in an organized manner. Is able to produce publicity materials, reports and other written materials for the Service Site.



Change Management

Introduces the process of change and its influences, both positive and negative, to others. Manages the change process to ensure that desired outcomes are consistently achieved.



Time Management

Manages time effectively by getting as many important tasks accomplished as possible, while maintaining the flexibility to meet others' emerging needs.